



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

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KENTUCKY FFA MEMBERS EXCEL AT NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – Kentucky FFA was well represented at the 88th Annual National FFA Convention, which was held October 28-31 in Louisville. An all-time record of 65,173 FFA members from across the United States attended the convention, which is the largest youth organization gathering in the United States.

Ruth Ann Myers of the Boyle County chapter helped lead the Convention as the Eastern Region Vice President. During her year of service, Myers has traveled more than 100,000 miles and spoken to thousands of FFA members about leadership, personal growth, and careers in the agriculture industry. Myers represented Kentucky well throughout the year and capped it off with an inspiring retirement address titled “The Best Day Ever.”

Kentucky had two National Proficiency Winners at the convention. Proficiency awards are based on a written application detailing the student's accomplishments and learning related to his or her Supervised Agricultural Experience Program. National finalists complete an in-depth interview with industry leaders as part of the selection process.

- Austin Wilson of Whitley County was named the winner in the Forest Products and Management Proficiency Contest. Wilson has worked with his father in a lumber operation and has purchased a third interest in the business. He is the son of Joe and Sonja Wilson. His advisors are Glen Croley and Brian Prewitt.
- Caleb Brannon of Calloway County was named the National Winner in the Agriscience Research Integrated Systems Proficiency Contest. Brannon was recognized for his research related to agriculture energy and renewable fuels. His work has included research with switchgrass, energy beets and solar power, among other topics. Brannon is the son of Tony and Lisa Brannon. His advisors are Jacob Falwell and Bill Sampson.

Four other Kentucky FFA members were named national finalists in their respective proficiency award areas:

- Diversified Horticulture – Caleb Fulkerson, Spencer County
- Fruit Production – Adam Light, Spencer County
- Sheep Production – Mason Arnold, Taylor County
- Wildlife Management – Nick Hope, Muhlenberg County

Spencer County FFA won the Dairy Cattle Evaluation Career Development Event (CDE). Members of the Dairy Cattle Evaluation team included Marissa Allen (sixth overall), Ryan Linton (fifth overall), Tanner Goodlett (fourth overall), and Jacob Whitely (seventh overall). FFA Advisor Bland Baird served as the coach of the Dairy Evaluation team. This is the sixth time since 2006 that Spencer County has won the national Dairy Evaluation CDE.

Several Kentucky Career Development Teams placed in the top ten nationally:

- Job Interview Career Development Event – Payton Carter of Thomas Nelson FFA, 3rd place

(more)

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Page 2 – FFA Award

- Farm Business Management Career Development –Spencer County FFA, 3rd place. Team members were Zachary Berry, Rachel Clark, Garrett Helm, and Zachary Martin. Zachary Martin placed fifth overall and Garrett Helm placed ninth.
- Creed Speaking Career Development Event – Grace Sink from Oneida Baptist FFA, 4th place
- Agronomy Career Development Event – Franklin Simpson FFA, 5th place. Team members were John Forshee, John Webb, Grace Clar, and Robert Carey.
- Food Science Career Development Event – Emma Shelton of LaRue County, 8th place. Shelton has received a gold rating in three individual Career Development Events during her high school career.
- Horse Evaluation Career Development Event – Braden Young of Mercer County, 10th place

Other teams competing in National Career Development Events included:

CDE Area	Rating	Chapter
Agriculture Communications	Silver	LaRue County
Agriculture Issues Forum	Silver	Central Hardin
Agriculture Sales	Silver	South Warren
Agriculture Technology and Mechanical Systems	Silver	Whitley County
Dairy Cattle Handlers	Silver	Taylor County, Korri Briggs
Environmental and Natural Resources	Gold	North Hardin
Floriculture	Silver	Edmonson County
Food Science	Gold	LaRue County
Forestry	Silver	Whitley County
Horse Evaluation	Gold	Mercer County
Livestock Evaluation	Silver	Cumberland County
Marketing Plan	Silver	Spencer County
Meats Evaluation	Silver	Spencer County
Milk Quality and Products	Silver	LaRue County
Nursery	Bronze	Rockcastle County
Parliamentary Procedure	Bronze	Mercer County
Poultry	Bronze	Henderson County
Veterinary Science	Silver	Henderson County

The following members competed in National Speaking Career Development Events:

- Extemporaneous – Wesley Estes, Logan County, Bronze Rating
- Prepared Public –Gracie Furnish, Harrison County, Silver Rating

In the National Agriscience Fair, Zack Plummer of the Fleming County FFA chapter placed second in the Power, Structural, and Technical Systems division. In addition to Plummer, eight Kentucky FFA members placed in the top fifteen nationally in the Agriscience Fair. They were:

- Animal Systems Division 1 – Megan Underwood, Taylor County
- Environmental Science Division 3 – Joshua Corey and Makayla Stigall, Montgomery County
- Environmental Science Division 4 – Anne Littrell and Harlie Wells, Barren County
- Power, Structure, and Technical Systems Division 4 – Abigail Lanier and Allie O’Neil, Carlisle Co.
- Social Systems Division 1 – Abbey Dickerson, South Warren

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Page 3 – FFA awards

The American FFA Degree was awarded to 98 Kentucky FFA members. This honor is the highest award the organization can bestow on a member.

Tori Young of the Gallatin County FFA represented Kentucky as a National Officer Candidate.

In the area of Chapter Development, Nelson County FFA and Spencer County FFA were recognized as two of ten national finalists for the National Model of Innovation Award.

Fifteen Kentucky FFA chapters were recognized in the National Chapter Contest. The chapters recognized as National Three Star Chapters are:

- Bourbon County
- Boyle County
- Henderson County
- LaRue County
- Marion County
- Nelson County
- Rockcastle County
- Scott County
- Spencer County
- Taylor County
- Thomas Nelson

Those recognized as National Two Star Chapters are:

- Apollo
- Jessamine County
- Russell County
- South Warren

The North Hardin FFA chapter represented Kentucky in the National Hall of States.

Wyatt Wood of McCracken County and Halie Sawyers of Todd Central represented Kentucky in the National FFA Talent competition. Wood placed in the top 15 overall and sang the National Anthem at the American Degree Ceremony.

Patra Caldwell and Autumn Dunaway of Ballard Memorial, Hollie Doyle of Bourbon County, Harrison Garden of South Warren, and Hunter Anne Julian of Daviess County represented Kentucky in the National FFA Chorus. Caldwell was selected to perform a solo on stage and Dunaway was selected to sing the National Anthem at the Friday night rodeo.

Ty Allen of Madison Southern and Parker Stewart of Bracken County represented Kentucky in the National FFA Band.

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Page 4 – FFA awards

Kentucky Agriculture teachers Darryl Matherly of Spencer County and Wes York of Caldwell County received the Honorary American FFA Degree in recognition for their leadership in the Kentucky Association of Agricultural Educators.

David S. Beck, Executive Vice President of Kentucky Farm Bureau received the VIP Citation for his work as Site Committee Host for the National Convention during its time in Louisville.

For a complete listing of National Convention winners, visit

<https://www.ffa.org/events/conventionandexpo/highlights>.

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